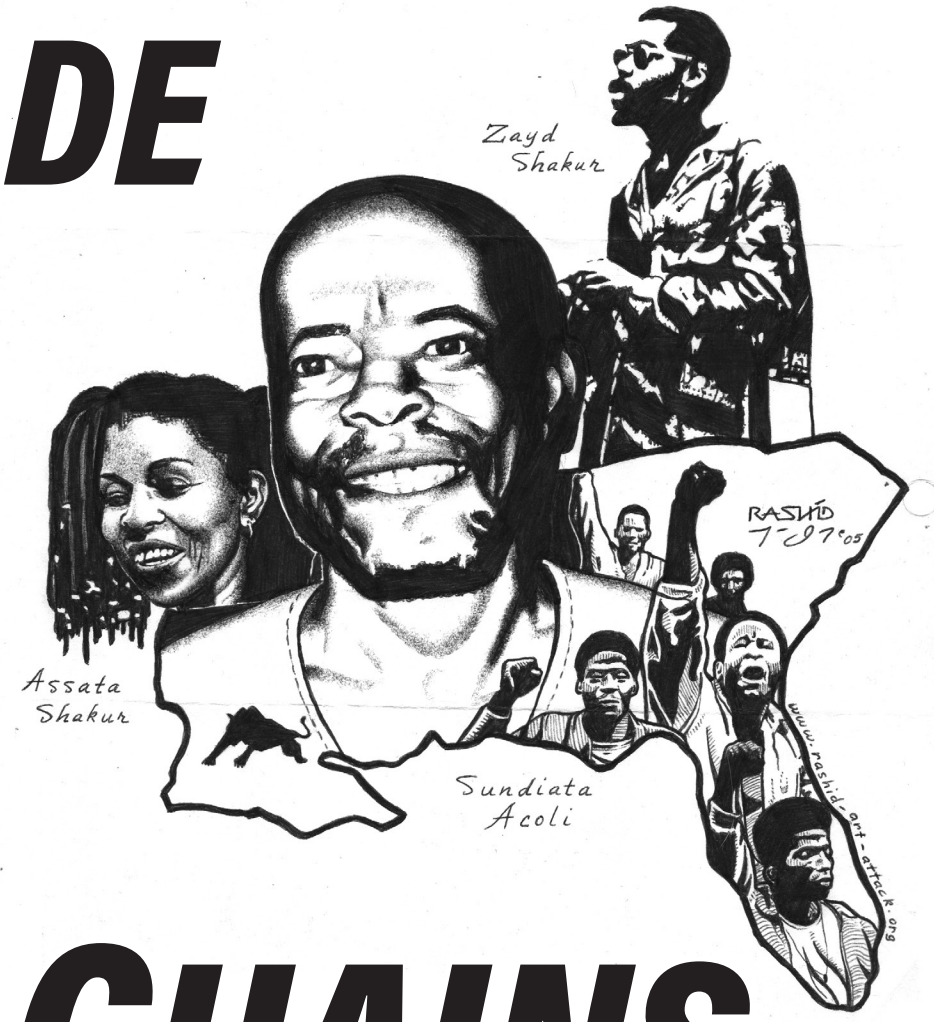
As the messages in "Break de Chains" attest, Black revolutionaries refuse to co-exist, peacefully, with an amerikkkan government which systematically oppresses and murders Black people. The Black Liberation Army is determined that there must and will be a Black nucleus dedicated to the *physical elimination of oppression*.

BREAK DE CHAINS



Published 1973

Cover by Kevin “Rashid” Johnson

"At the level of individuals, violence is a cleansing force. It frees the native from his inferiority complex and from his despair and inaction; it makes him fearless and restores his self-respect."

FANON

Break de Chains

With the first cold, metallic sensation, Afrikans began to jangle de chains, rattle de chains, shake de chains, and to break de chains: the chains of european aggression and oppression. The Black Liberation Army is Afrikans' most recent effort to break de chains.

Near the end of the 15th century Portugal began trade negotiations with the Afrikan Kingdoms Angola and the Kongo. Before long Afrikans knew they were aggressed upon, being tricked. As we had done more than a thousand years before with the Assyrians, Persians, Greeks and Romans, we put up a formidable resistance to protect Black civilization. So began the long and continual modern resistance to european aggression.

The purpose of european invasions into Afrika during the 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries was to colonize Afrikan people and to remove natural resources: gold, diamonds, ivory, oil, timber. And, of course, Afrika's most valuable natural resource, living human beings, Afrikan people, for enslavement in other parts of the wold.

Everywhere and in every way we Black people resisted the encroachment of the enemy. We used spears, rocks and captured weapons. Trudging, chained and barefoot, to waiting coastal ships, we broke our chains and used them as weapons against our enemy. We fought and seized slave ships.

We continued to resist after we were landed on alien shores. We formed unions with Native peoples, such as the Seminole Nation, and resisted. We organized, fought and won the Haitian Revolution. We rebelled with Denmark Vesey, Nat Turner and Sojourner Truth. We organized and conducted escapes with Harriet Tubman.

Back home, on the continent, Tchaka Zulu and the Zulu warriors

resisted the Dutch invasion of South Afrika. The Ashanti fought the British in West Afrika; the Ethiopians fought the Italians; and the Mau Mau fought the British in East Afrika. Always, continued Black resistance to continued european aggression.

In amerikkka resistance continued for aggression continued. Blacks formed the Deacons for Justice to resist southern u.s.a. lynching; there were urban rebellions in the sixties; and the slaves, Ruchell Magee, Willie Christmas, Jonathan Jackson, and James McClain rebelled. And every day in our communities we resisted the pigs' handcuffs, chains.

Portugal, in 1973, is still in Angola and Afrikans continue to resist. Blacks in Mozambique formed "Frelimo," the people's liberation army. In amerikkka, 1970s oppression continues and resistance continues. Afrikans in amerikkka formed the "Black Liberation Army."

The Black Liberation Army is in the vanguard of the Afrikan Liberation struggle in amerikkka. As the messages in "Break de Chains" attest, Black revolutionaries refuse to co-exist, peacefully, with an amerikkkan government which systematically oppresses and murders Black people. The Black Liberation Army is determined that there must and will be a Black nucleus dedicated to the *physical elimination of oppression.*

De chains must be broken. De "chained" must support the Black Liberation Army.

National Committee for the Defense of
Jo Anne Chesimard and Clark Squire
September, 1973

is free, a Black Liberation Army. The main function of the Black Liberation Army at this time is to create good examples to struggle for Black freedom and to prepare for the future. We must defend ourselves and let no one disrespect us. We must gain our liberation by any means necessary.

It is our duty to fight for our freedom. It is our duty to win. We must love each other and support each other. We have nothing to lose but our chains!

In the spirit of:

Ronald Carter
William Christmas
Mark Clark
Mark Essex
Frank Heavy Fields
Woodie Changa Olugbala Green
Fred Hampton
Lil' Bobby Hutton
George Jackson
Jonathan Jackson
James McClain
Harold Russell
Zayd Malik Shakur
Anthony Kimu Olugbala White

We must fight on.

Assata Olugbala Shakur
July 6, 1973
Middlesex County Workhouse

From the Bowels of the Beast: A Message

Right On!

I want to send revolutionary greetings and love to all my brothers and sisters, revolutionaries, oppressed people and people everywhere. My name is Sundiata Hashashim Acoli (formerly Clark Squire) coming to you from deep inside the bowels of the beast in solitary confinement. Also to send my deepest appreciation to all those brothers and sisters that responded so warmly to the radio program and message of the beautiful sister Assata Shakur (formerly Jo Anne Chesimard).

A few words about the new jersey turnpike incident: as revolutionaries we had no business being on the turnpike at that time of night. We had intended to travel during the rush hour (and possibly by other means) but certain unavoidable events prevented this. After we were stopped, the events that followed were a clear case of self-defense. I repeat that, *a clear case of self-defense*. That will be brought out later, during the trial.

I want to say a few words about Sister Assata Shakur because I want all of you to know exactly what kind of person the sister is and then you will better understand what type of person you are, and what you ought to be.

From the beginning I was impressed by Assata's humanness, her spirit, her clarity of thought and expression. As time went on I was impressed by her sincerity, her warmness and complete dedication to the liberation of Black people. I began to realize that her very essence, that every fiber in her body, every move, every thought, every action was in the sole interest of Black people, their liberation and revolution. I decided to hook-up with this sister, to help her help Black peoples. It has long been my opinion that as long as there was *one* person out there trying to do the job, then, as long as I could

draw a breath there would always be *two*. And last, I was impressed by her courage: for I have seen the sister walk with calmness and complete dedication into places where mighty Afro'd brothers would be terrified to tread—and do it time and time again. Fully aware of the danger, and yet, fully determined to do everything in her power to show Black people by *action*, not words alone, the way to Liberation!

We Black people ought not stand idly by and let the slavemaster plunder our treasures, our heroines, our women and our heritage over and over again. This time only Black people can save our precious jewel Assata. The communist party usa is not interested, she's too Black; most of the liberals are scared, she's too fiery; the big money backers are holding tight, it's a bad investment, she's incorruptible; so, Black people, you got it. This time, only Black people can save Sister Assata. It is only fitting that we do so...We have to free our sister, Assata, by any means necessary. If I was out there, I would. If Zayd Malik Shakur was out there in the physical form, I know he would. I refuse to believe there are no more Black men and women out there.

And now I want to talk to you about something very important to me, to all revolutionaries, and to you also: awareness.

Awareness is a trait so essential to a people, to the youth, to revolutionaries, to everyone, that without it, as Malcolm X often said, "Your friends are made to look like your enemies and your enemies are made to look like your friends." Awareness is essential because it determines your actions. And once you become properly aware you *will* act. Aware you could no more refuse to act than to stand in the middle of a RR track and watch a runaway locomotive bear down on you. You will act and act in the correct manner because it is a matter of life and death that you do so. You will either move off that RR track or be killed. Being "unaware" is like standing in the middle of that same track blind, your ears plugged,

and Latin Amerika of their natural resources and freedom while the people are sick and starving. The rulers of this country and their flunkies have committed some of the most brutal, vicious crimes in history. They are the bandits. They are the murderers. And they should be treated as such. These maniacs are not fit to judge me, Clark Squire, or any other Black person on trial in amerikkka. Black people should, and, inevitably must, determine our destinies.

Every revolution in history has been accomplished by actions, although words are necessary. We must create shields that protect us and spears that penetrate our enemies. Black people must learn how to struggle by struggling. We must learn by our mistakes.

I want to apologize to you, my Black brothers and sisters, for being on the new jersey turnpike. I should have known better. The turnpike is a checkpoint where Black people are stopped, searched, harassed and assaulted. Revolutionaries must never be in too much of a hurry or make careless decisions. He who runs when the sun is sleeping will stumble many times.

Every time a Black Freedom Fighter is murdered or captured the pigs try to create the impression that they have squashed the movement, destroyed our forces and put down the Black Revolution. The pigs also try to give the impression that 5 or 10 Guerrillas are responsible for every revolutionary action carried out in amerikkka. That is nonsense. That is absurd. Black revolutionaries do not drop from the moon. We are created by our conditions, shaped by our oppression. We are being manufactured in droves in ghetto streets, places like attica, san quentin, bedford hills, leavenworth and sing sing. They are turning out thousands of us. Many jobless Black veterans and welfare mothers are joining our ranks. Brothers and sisters from all walks of life who are tired of suffering passively make up the BLA.

There is and always will be, until every Black man, woman and child

best to kill us before we are born. We are burned alive in firetrap tenements. Our brothers and sisters O.D. daily from heroin and methadone. Our babies die from lead poisoning. Millions of Black people have died as a result of indecent medical care. This is murder. But they have the gall to call us the murderers.

They call us kidnappers, yet Brother Clark Squire (who is accused along with me of murdering a new jersey state trooper) was kidnapped on April 2, 1969, from our Black community and held on $100,000 ransom in the New York Panther 21 conspiracy case. He was acquitted on May 13, 1971 along with all the others of all the 156 counts of conspiracy by a jury that took less than 2 hours to deliberate. Brother Squire was innocent. Yet he was kidnapped from his community and family. Over two years of his life was stolen, but they call us kidnappers. They call us kidnappers, but we did not kidnap the thousands of Brothers and Sisters held captive in amerikkka's concentration camps. 90% of the prison population in this country are Black and Third World people who can afford neither bail nor lawyers.

They call us thieves and bandits. They say we steal. But it was not us who stole millions of Black people from the continent of Afrika. We were robbed of our language, of our Gods, of our culture, of our human dignity, of our labor and of our lives. They call us thieves yet it is not us who rip off billions of dollars every year through tax evasions, illegal price fixing, embezzlement, consumer fraud, bribes, kickbacks and swindles. They call us bandits, yet every time most Black people pick up our paychecks we are being robbed. Every time we walk into a store in our neighborhood we are being held up. And every time we pay our rent the landlord sticks a gun into our ribs.

They call us thieves, but we did not rob and murder millions of Indians by ripping off their homeland, then call ourselves pioneers. They call us bandits but it is not us who are robbing Afrika, Asia

mouth gagged and your hands and feet bound—but that still does not stop that train from bearing down on you.

Awareness will also help you understand why revolutionaries move the way they do. Revolutionaries do not each day wake up in the morning, make their beds, clean their teeth, etc. Revolutionaries wake up in the middle of the night as often as the day, they make up new stratagems along with their beds, clean their guns along with teeth, dress in their disguise for the day and commute to work with guns in their valises. No, not all revolutionaries do this, also not every day. Many righteous revolutionaries work regular 9–5s just as you do; but what I'm trying to say is that revolution is not a set, fixed process. Revolution is a continuous learning process—learning by doing—of dealing with new approaches, new methods, new techniques—all with the same purpose: Liberation!

Every new push is based on all the experience gathered in the past; but it is still a new push. And sometimes we blow—and this is mostly what you hear about, not our many successes. But this is also a problem we revolutionaries are working on—so you will hear more of our successes. In the meantime when you hear the oppressor trying to discredit some revolutionary act, smile, aware that he lies, been lying, and when you come right down to it, he ain't never told the truth about nothing.

For if he told you the truth, he would have to tell you that you are being pimped, yes, pimped. That you are out in the streets making money for him. His job is to keep you unaware. When you get too old (if you should live that long) you'll be sent to pasture to starve on social security for he can always find someone to hustle that dollar for him. If he told you the truth, he would have to say he's been running his game for 500 years; ever since he first showed in Afrika, Asia, Latin Amerika and amerikkka itself with a gun, a bible, a racist deck of cards and a brand new racist game called money-capitalism.

Brothers and sisters it would be very naive to expect the oppressor to tell us the truth. If he did pandemonium would break out; our grandmothers would run out in the street and throw bricks; young brothers would take many, many heads; blood would flow thru out the land and the oppressor would be no more—we, all of us, the people would be free.

But until that day there will be revolutionaries. Many revolutionaries will go to jail and also, the graveyard. And many, many oppressors will go to the graveyard. And every time the oppressor announces that he has "broken the backs" of the Black Liberation Army, of the revolutionaries, we will know that he's lying, he's whistling "dixie." The oppressor is caught in a terrible trick bag, and he knows it. For there will be revolutionaries, there will be a Black Liberation Army for as long as there are jails and oppressed Black people. Every time he sends someone to jail he is creating revolutionaries, he's increasing the ranks of the BLA. And every time he says he has "broken the back" of the revolutionaries, of the BLA, more brothers and sisters will rise to make him gag, strangle and choke on his own lies, suffocate in the vomit of his own greed.

The jails are the Universities of the Revolutionaries and the finishing schools of the Black Liberation Army. Come, brothers and sisters, meet Assata Shakur. She is here holding seminars in "Getting Down," "Taming the Paper Tiger," and "The Selected Works of Zayd Malik Shakur." So brothers and sisters do not fear jail. Many of you will go anyway—ignorance will be your crime. Others will come—awareness their only crime.

In all sincerity, I think everyone should go to jail at least once. In jail, for the first time, you will read as you never read before, you will think, write and discuss ideas with other brothers and sisters about our common oppression both in the jails and in the streets and what to do about it. You will eat, sleep and breathe oppression 24 hours a day—and you will meet the oppressor—full blown and buck naked

hear, that we are the victims. The victims and not the criminals.

It should also be clear to us by now who the real criminals are. Nixon and his crime partners have murdered hundreds of Third World brothers and sisters in Vietnam, Cambodia, Mozambique, Angola and South Afrika. As was proved by the Watergate, the top law enforcement officials in this country are a lying bunch of criminals. The president, two attorney generals, the head of the fbi, the head of the cia, and half the white house staff have been implicated in the Watergate crimes.

They call us murderers, but we did not murder over 250 unarmed Black men, women and children, and wound thousands of others in the riots they provoked during the sixties. The rulers of this country have always considered their property more important than our lives. They call us murderers, but we were not responsible for the 28 brother inmates and the 9 hostages murdered at attica. They call us murderers but we did not murder and wound over 30 unarmed Black students at Jackson State or Southern State either.

They call us murderers, but we did not murder Martin Luther King, Emmett Till, Medgar Evers, Malcolm X, George Jackson, Nat Turner, James Chaney and countless other Black freedom fighters. We did not bomb four (4) Black little girls in a Sunday School. We did not murder, by shooting in the back, 16-year-old Rita Lloyd, 11-year-old Rickie Bodden or 10-year-old Clifford Glover.

They call us murderers, but we do not control or enforce a system of racism and oppression that systematically murders Black and Third World people. Although Black people supposedly comprise about 15% of the total amerikkkan population, at least 60% of murder victims are Black. For every pig that is killed in the so-called line of duty there are at least 50 Black people murdered by police.

Black life expectancy is much lower than white and they do their

TO MY PEOPLE

Black brothers, Black sisters, I want you to know that I love you and I hope that somewhere in your heart you have love for me. My name is Assata Shakur (slave name jo anne chesimard), and I am a revolutionary. A Black revolutionary. By that I mean that I am a field nigger who is determined to be free by any means necessary. By that I mean that I have declared war on all forces that have raped our women, castrated our men and kept our babies empty bellied.

I have declared war on the rich who prosper on our poverty. The politicians who lie to us with smiling faces and all the mindless, heartless robots who protect them and their property.

I am a Black revolutionary, and, as such, I am the victim of all the wrath, hatred and slander that amerikkka is capable of. Like all other Black revolutionaries, I have been hunted like a dog, and like all other Black revolutionaries, amerikkka is trying to lynch me.

I am a Black revolutionary woman and because of this I have been charged with and accused of every alleged crime in which a woman was believed to have participated. The alleged crime in which only men were supposedly involved, I have been accused of planning. They have plastered pictures alleged to be me in post offices, airports, hotels, police cars, subways, banks, televisions and newspapers. They have offered over fifty thousand dollars ($50,000) in rewards for my capture and they have issued orders to shoot on sight and shoot to kill.

I am a Black revolutionary and, by definition, that makes me part of the Black Liberation Army. The pigs have used their newspaper and TVs to paint the Black Liberation Army as vicious, brutal, mad dog criminals. They have called us gangsters and gun molls, and have compared us to such character as john dillinger and ma barker. It should be clear, it must be clear to anyone who can think, see or

in his natural surroundings. You will also meet some very beautiful, bold brothers and sisters that will help you righteously deal with the oppressor even in his very bowels. And you will become aware! You will become aware that you have been in jail all your life; that revolutions are conceived in the jails, then birth, grow and mature in the streets; and last, that most of our true leaders, most of our true heroes are in jail.

We would really be naive to think that the oppressor will tell us about our true heroes. The ones who stuck heap fierce foot in his ass, knives in his throat and bust caps in his head ever since he first showed in Afrika, all the way over in the ships, all during slavery, even until today and unto our children who will continue from one generation to the next until we are all free. No, he will not tell us about those; he will tell us we had no warriors, no heroes. For those we will have to turn inward, study our history, ask our mothers, fathers and our grandparents.

Sit down one day and ask your grandpops about the virtual insurrections that went down after World War I. Ask him if he ever had a fight with the oppressor; watch the gleam come into his eyes. He'll take out his tobacco pouch and stuff his pipe or may go look in that beat up trunk and bring out the buntline special he never showed you. And brother, you can forget about the rest of the day cause grandpa's going to rap until your ears fall off.

Ask your pops or moms the same about during and after World War II. You will see the same gleam but this time you know in advance the rest of the day is shot. And when they finish, they will say, "But we had to do those things. You young people got it made now, so don't you do it." They're lying. They lie because no father wants to see his son shot. No mother wants to see her daughter raped. It is still going on.

So brothers and sisters what I'm saying is that we have never laid

down and played dead for this madness. Only the oppressor will have us think so. Our fathers and mothers and their parents' parents fought every way they knew how against oppression and now it is our turn and tomorrow our children and on and on until we are free.

We can't become aware, brothers and sisters, by reading the ny times, the wall street journal or the ny daily news. To become aware we must check out what those newspapers (books, pamphlets) that are opposed to the oppressor say. I'm talking about you reading Black Revolutionary and Nationalist newspapers; revolutionary and nationalist press of other Third World communities around us; and all foreign newspapers that oppose the oppressor and his racist game. So check out the media of the Third World on issues that affect us. No of course it will not all be true; but a much greater amount will be true—though more often painful—than in the oppressor's media.

Everyone *can't*, *won't* and *don't* need to pick up the gun, only a small percentage *will* for that matter. But all wars, and in particular, revolutionary wars, are fought with less that 5% of the total population in actual combat for each side. 5% of all Blacks means at least 1½ million mad, intelligent, crazy, armed and extremely dangerous niggers, in the streets, on the highways and in the countryside. Just to break even in a revolutionary war the government would need at least a 10 to 1 advantage. The government would need at least 15 million troops in combat to break even. I think the average size of the u.s. army is, in wartime, about 3 to 6 million. So what is needed is heavy support from the people in all forms (houses, guns, ammo, info, doctors, cars, finance, food, etc.). That's why revolution is called a people's war.

But the first step is awareness. So check out your history, check out your parents and their parents, check out the revolutionaries, the nationalists, the prisoners, check out all those opposed to the oppressor. You will become aware—an offense punishable by death

Zayd Malik Shakur
and
Members of the Black Liberation Army
Babylon
March, 1972

but have now pointed our guns at the People's true enemies. We can be found in the Harlems, Bed-Stuys, Watts, Hunts-Point and all places in between; drinking wine on the corner; fringing the junkies nod; across the street from the police headquarters. In other words, we are just plain everyday niggers; or the new Black man and woman! from every walk of life.

There are many other guerrilla activities that we have not elaborated on; kidnappings, the skyjacking of commercial aircrafts, terrorism, etc...But because we have not rapped about this, because with very few exceptions we haven't got off into these various areas of operations, doesn't mean that we haven't ruled it out. We have also not ruled out rural guerrilla warfare, because we know that 50% of people are still located in the rural areas of the south. And we have every intention of uniting both forces.

As we've said before there have been many mistakes made. But as Carlos Marighella has said, "It is better to act mistakenly than do nothing for fear of doing wrong." All Black and other Third World people in Babylon are not going to make the sacrifice necessary to bring about the total liberation of the people. But if you're not going to help the revolution, then you shouldn't stand in its way.

To all our captured comrades, many other brothers and sisters, along with our comrades in political exile, we send revolutionary greetings. And we hope to see all of you on the battlefield...Very soon!

Death to the u.s. ruling class!

Death to all their lackeys and accomplices!

Victory to the Liberation of Babylon!

and/or almost certain imprisonment. But do not fear becoming aware, to understand, to know the truth. The truth shall make you free! And do not fear the jails—we have excellent doctors here, the best in the country, guaranteed to cure unawareness.

At last! Come comrades, let us go and join the celebration. You have graduated. You have become aware. And tomorrow, you go back into the streets, truly free, to free us all.

Sundiata Hashashim Zayd Acoli
July 18, 1973
Middlesex County Jail
P.O. Box 1381
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

slave name: anthony white
Name in Struggle: Kimu Olugbala

slave name: woodie green
Name in Struggle: Changa Olugbala

Two Black men lived, two Black men loved, two Black men fought, two Black men died. They were born into a world of beaten men and women, tired oxen in barren pastures. Born into a world where Black babies and Black minds are systematically exterminated. Detained in schools teaching self-hate and obedience. Educated by the scars of pain and reality. They were guided by the teachings of Malcolm X, Marighella, Lumumba and all those who have helped to make revolution.

They were young Blacks who once hung out, empty bellied, on the corners of oblivion, who were once possessed by the white witch of death (heroin). They were young Black men who had been kidnapped, tried and convicted of being Black. Black men who had been bound and gagged and caged in white men's zoos. They were Black men who had vowed to never return. They saw truth and recognized it. They saw a way to freedom and were not afraid to take it.

They were field niggers who tried to burn down massa's house; they were field niggers who refused to compromise. They were field niggers who refused to adjust. They were not bribed by a penny promotion. They were not bribed by cadillacs or cocaine. They were not bribed by cheap promises and programs. They were field niggers who loved other niggers, field niggers who knew that the whole is more important than the part, and that there is no substitute for freedom. They were tired of the past and anxious for the future. They were tired of begging, they were anxious to take. They were tired of rhetoric, they were anxious for action. They were tired of

action has constantly shifted from the streets to the prisons.

The pigs also relate very heavily to the foco theory, and because they can't find this stereotype leadership among us, anymore, they say the Black Liberation Army is leaderless. This is bullshit! Our "leaders" are the most experienced brothers and sisters among us, or seasoned guerrillas who have been tested under fire.

The Urban Guerrillas are just as concerned about exploitation, dope, bad housing and other problems that our communities are confronted with as the political warriors are, but it has become necessary to deal with it on a different level. The exploiters deposit their blood money in the capitalist banks, the revolutionaries go to the banks and make withdrawals. They will not wait until another eight-year-old child O.D.s before they move on a dope dealer. And if a baby dies of pneumonia the guerrilla believes the slumlord should receive the ultimate punishment. It's an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.

The BLA understands the importance of the Mass Political Movement. We are not coming from a purely military viewpoint, undermining the importance of building a strong United Front. But we must go about this in a different way. The political apparatus will have to deal with the bourgeois nationalist and the "tribal bureaucrats" in the struggle to build a united front. For us, a "United Front is Fire Power," is revolutionary action, and nothing else. Moreover, the mass front cannot survive without fire power. It would be like the people gaining liberation without a liberation army.

Who are we? We are students of life; fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, armed poets and lovers. We are workers and the unemployed. The escapees and parolees from amerikkka's dungeons who were busted for sticking a gun in a pig's face. We're ex-GIs (mercenaries) who have learned the techniques of modern warfare,

Just because we do not function in the aboveground political arena does not mean we are a bunch of apolitical murderers and criminals, as the pigs allege. Contrary to some criticisms, our politics are not those of the orthodox communist, and indeed, some of us do not even claim to be Marxist-Leninists. We are dealing with an entirely different situation here in the guts of the imperialist beast, and "orthodoxy," says Carlos Marighella, "belongs to religion, old religion." Our policies and discipline differ from those of aboveground political organizations.

The various guerrilla groups are entirely autonomous and decentralized and do not have to wait on orders coming from the "high command." There are no political commissars to these guerrilla groups, nor do we have charismatic, superstar, long, long distance leaders dictating policies from afar. It's not about receiving a clandestine message from above, ordering a guerrilla unit to move on target A or target B. Our leadership is a collective leadership. Whether the task is "collecting a compulsory revolutionary tax" from a bank, or punishing a pig by death, everyone gets down together including the "leader." We relate to tactical and strategic principles and not to personalities. "Our only obligation is to act."

The leadership question has also led to a lot of confusion concerning the foco theory. Lord knows the pigs are confused. (The "foco" or "focomotion" as George Jackson related to it simply means the center point of action. Once this center of action has been initiated, the theory goes, it will be the moving force of the revolution and the masses of oppressed people will pick up the gun and fight until final victory.) In Latin Amerika, Che and Debray were the champions of rural guerrilla war being the foco, or center point of action. Marighella took the action to the large industrial cities of Brazil and urban guerrilla war became the foco. In Babylon, the foco has usually been Black people, personified in emerging, charismatic leaders. For example, Elijah Muhammad, Brother Malcolm, Huey, Eldridge, Fred Hampton, George Jackson. This explains why the

slavery, they were anxious for freedom. They are not alone. They are not unsung. Their bravery will be carved on the minds of tomorrow. Their love will be felt on the hearts of all those that struggle. They were part of a family that will have many children. They are part of a family that will fight until death.

The Olugbala Tribe
Black Liberation Army
Babylon
January, 1973

SPRING CAME EARLY THIS YEAR

In the past the struggle for Black Liberation in the united states was always associated with hot weather, or the summer time. Students were out of school, more people were in the streets, it was ninety degrees in the shade and Black tempers, in general, were considered to be extremely short, if not boiling over. The pig propagandist believed these traits were conducive to urban rebellion thus giving credence to the "Long Hot Summer" syndrome, at a time when Black people were off into a heavy trip of spontaneity. The impression was, when fall comes and particularly winter, everything will be cool. After all, niggers don't like cold weather!

What these pigs had totally negated is the fact that it is during winter months that Black and other Third World people suffer the most. Countless tragedies befall oppressed people when the hawk is out in full force: bad housing with broken windows, no heat or hot water. Our children die of pneumonia. The unemployment rate is higher. Drugs are still saturated into our communities. Fascist pig cops still murder and brutalize our people!

Our oppression is not seasonal, therefore, our resistance will not be seasonal.

* * *

In taking the giant step from the realm of theory to the realm of practice, the revolutionary will encounter many obstacles and many mistakes will be made. In revolutionary war, the guerrillas will encounter many years of failure before they get their shit together. But revolutionary wars are protracted wars. In Brazil, which is one of the most important countries in Latin Amerika and the world, the revolutionaries suffered many years of failures, and even after Carlos Marighella, along with other Brazilian comrades fled from the C.P. of Brazil, they still struggled for almost a year, with a single

revolutionary executions are not a question of Black and white. It's a question of who wears the midnight blue.

The Black revolutionary has no hang ups about nationalism, plus we are hip to its pitfalls. As a nation of people we are confronted with many internal contradictions. There are Black people exploiting Black people; Black people selling scag to Black people; and Black policemen murdering Black people—all in the service of our oppressors. We're mainly talking about the Black policeman here, and he is confronted with some very heavy internal and external contradictions. The struggle for Black liberation is being taken to a higher level, and while the "soul brother cop" is getting his shit together he will have to watch his back, on many fronts. (In Detroit, the other day [March 8, 1972] one Black policeman was shot to death and three others were seriously wounded by their fellow nigger officers. The Black policemen from STRESS thought the Black deputies were gamblers and the deputies thought the STRESS cops were robbers. STRESS (Stop The Robberies—Enjoy Safe Streets) teams have been responsible for the murder of twelve (12) people, eleven (11) of them Black people.) Either Black cops make their guns available to the commands of their people or they make themselves vulnerable to their people's wrath. It's their move.

* * *

Many people are asking what is the Black Liberation Army? We are small urban guerrilla units, waging armed struggle against the agents of death—the united states government, operating throughout Babylon. We are niggers, who, having grown tired of the defensive posture of the past, have decided to stand up, finally coming to the conclusion that the best defense is a good offense. We "view guerrilla war as an embryonic form of the National Liberation Army." We are the Babylonian equivalent to the Tupamaros of Uruguay, Frelimo of Mozambique, or the NLF of Vietnam. In other words we are the embryonic form of the people's army.

revolutionaries. Ali Aponte, the famous revolutionary of the Algerian Revolution, at one time was a bandit. After becoming politicized and because of a strong sense of nationalism, he pointed his guns at the enemies of the Algerian people, and put his expertise at their command. Ben Bella did two years in prison for sticking up the colonialist banks. Patrice Lumumba did sixteen months for attacking Belgian post offices. At one time even Brother Malcolm (Big Red) was a bandit. Stalin was the bank robber for the Russian Revolution. Ho Chi Minh spent many years in French prisons for ripping off the interests of the French colonialists. Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai both had prices on their heads. And we could go on, and on, and on. There are also tactical reasons for letting revolutionary acts seem like acts of banditry. By allowing expropriations to seem like acts of banditry, Brazilian revolutionaries gained time and were able to confuse the reactionaries for a year.

* * *

A lot of space has been dedicated to expropriations of funds because this is the area in which we have encountered the most difficulties. Another area in which the Black Liberation Army has run into heavy criticism is when they have dealt with revolutionary executions, particularly when the lives of Black policemen have been snuffed out. Many Black people say, "Right On!" when white policemen have been snuffed out, but have hang ups when it comes to moving on Black policemen. The Black policeman, Waverly Jones, met with Revolutionary Justice along with his white counterpart, Joseph Piagentini, in May of last year (1971); and Gregory Foster caught up with the same fate along with his crime partner, Rocco Laurie, in January of this year (1972). The pigs tried to play on the sympathy of the people. Every reactionary and his cousin went off into a Machiavellian divide-and-conquer bag. In desperation, high police officials were quoted as saying, "The Black Liberation Army is deliberately hunting Black policemen as murder targets," in their futile attempt to win the sympathy of Black people. But

act of expropriation. But as Marighella says, "It is hard to discover truth except in practice."

The same people who are always crying, "we ain't ready for the revolution because we ain't got no guns" are the very same niggers who are always crying broke. And just as it is historical fact that the easiest way to arm the revolution is by taking weapons from the enemy, the most scientific way to finance the revolution is by ripping off the capitalist banks. The police have the guns and the banks have the money. So this brings us to the act of expropriation.

Expropriations (the rip-off of arms, goods or money for revolutionary purposes) of funds has been the main area of operations for which we have received the most criticism. A lot of this criticism is the direct result of the pigs' reactionary propaganda. Then, too, a lot of this criticism resulted from the guerrillas' bad choice of targets.

Historically, funds funneled into the Black Liberation movement, with the exceptions of the Garvey movement and later the Nation of Islam, came mainly from liberal whites. But as the rhetoric of the Black Freedom Fighters became more militant, the money became more scarce. The money situation is uptight all over and sympathetic people, both Black and white, who have the cash are not about to give it up, especially to some crazy niggers who are going to take the cash to buy some more guns, so they can rip-off more enemies of the people and use the money for other revolutionary purposes. Realizing this source of revenue had just about been exhausted, the Urban Guerrillas created his or her own objective conditions. To paraphrase Carlos Marighella, "the Urban Guerrilla uses armed struggle and concentrates his activity on the physical extermination of the agents of repression and dedicates twenty-four hours a day to expropriation from the people's exploiters." The only question oppressed people should have concerning ripping-off the oppressor's stashes should be a question of methodology.

* * *

There are two types of expropriations: one is for the subsistence of the revolutionary and the other is for the revolutionary struggle. Many people were quick to criticize comrades who were allegedly busted in the act of sticking up taverns and social clubs, supposedly frequented by lumpen or working Black folks. Even though these comrades were moving on well-known dope dens, frequented by notorious Big Time drug pushers and not by ordinary lumpen or grassroots Blacks, these comrades were still the victims of narrow-minded criticisms. Like everyone appeared to be hurt, because these revolutionaries had to "stoop to that level." But these criticisms are irrelevant, unless the critics can offer an alternative.

Brothers and sisters underground must deal with their personal survival. Most of them are outlaws, and unless they are receiving financial aid, which usually runs out in a short period of time, they are forced to deal with a Steve Brody. (The names "Steve Brody" and "Humphrey Bogart" are very popular among stick-up kids. While most people are hip to Bogart, Steve Brody became famous by placing bets all over the world on his ability to successfully jump off the Brooklyn Bridge. The meaning of a "Steve Brody" has changed over the years, and nobody seems to know the exact meaning. But today, a Brody usually denotes an act of desperation with a high degree of risk.) "In fact," wrote Marighella, "It is impossible for an urban guerrilla to subsist or survive without taking part in the battle of expropriation." Before the guerrillas can Bogart Rockefeller's money, they may have to deal with a Brody. It's a question of one having to crawl before they can walk. It gives the guerrillas, who, in some cases are only vaguely familiar with one another, the opportunity to get down together with gun-in-hand. Many brothers and sisters have never stuck a gun in a pig's face before, and unless they are "stick-up kids" who have been politicized, they may be unfamiliar with the science of expropriations. The Brody has been the catalyst that has established many revolutionary groups. It builds

trust among the participants. Everyone is watching one another's back—under the gun—and it is a testing ground in preparation for going to get Rockefeller's money and his life too. That's a Bogart!

These criticisms of Steve Brodys are very valid; but our critics should lay on us some more wisdom, other than what Ray Charles laid on us a few years ago when he said, "You gotta have something, before you get something—but how you get the first is still a mystery." Well it ain't a mystery anymore. You get the first by taking it; whether it's from the exploitive merchants on the corners; the bank on the next corner; or the Tom-Mix-looking-Nigger, selling dope out of the trunk of his eldorado hog, parked on the next corner.

* * *

Sometimes the acts of revolutionaries and the acts of bandits are indistinctable. The guerrillas must set very clear examples so that the oppressed masses can make very clear distinctions. Bandits indulge in rip-offs for individualistic reasons, for personal gain. The guerrillas deal with expropriation of funds for the purpose of financing the revolution.

> Therefore, the guerrillas will try to make clear the political purpose of his actions, in two ways. He will refuse to behave like a bandit, either by misguided violence, or by taking money or personal possessions from customers who may be in the bank; and he will back up expropriation by some form of propaganda—writing slogans, attacking the ruling class and imperialism on the wall, handing out pamphlets, or giving people leaflets explaining the political purpose of what he is doing.

* * *

In the final analysis, there is a thin line between bandits and